

REMARKS

Claims 1-4, 7, 9-16, 18, and 20 are pending in the present application. By this amendment, claims 1, 12, 15-16, 18, and 20 are amended, and claims 17 and 19 are canceled without prejudice. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the present claims in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

I. Claim Rejections

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) Over Walker

Claims 1-2, 10-11, 15, and 18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by United States Patent No. 5,825,863 to Walker (hereinafter “Walker”). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

A. Claims 1-2, 10-11, and 15 are allowable.

As amended, claim 1 recites that a method for prepaid communications comprises receiving a predefined condition, wherein the predefined condition comprises an origination number and a destination number; receiving a communications connection from an origination number directed to a destination number; determining if the origination number of the received communications connection is the origination number of the predefined condition and if the destination number of the received communications connection is the destination number of the predefined condition; and if the origination number of the received communications connection is the origination number of the predefined condition and if the destination number of the received communications connection is the destination number of the predefined condition, then deducting the cost of the communications connection from the user account. Similarly, claim 15 recites that a computer readable medium for prepaid communications comprises a second set of instructions for receiving a predefined condition, wherein the predefined condition comprises an origination number and a destination number; a third set of instructions for receiving a communications connection from an origination number directed to a destination number; a fourth set of instructions for determining if the origination number of the received communications connection is the origination number of the predefined

condition and if the destination number of the received communications connection is the destination number of the predefined condition; and a fifth set of instructions for deducting the cost of the communications connection from the user account if the origination number of the received communications connection is the origination number of the predefined condition and if the destination number of the received communications connection is the destination number of the predefined condition.

Walker does not teach, suggest, or describe a method or computer readable medium for prepaid communications as recited in claims 1 and 15, respectively. On the contrary, Walker describes a method for enabling prepayment of telephone call charges including receiving a general-access telephone number which connects the calling party to a call processing computer; receiving the telephone number of the called telephone station from the calling party; comparing the telephone number of the called telephone station with a list of authorized cardholder accounts; and if the telephone number of the called telephone station has an associated cardholder account, then connecting the call to the called telephone station and debiting the calling card account. This is not analogous to the method or computer readable medium recited in claims 1 and 15, respectively, because Walker fails to teach, suggest, or describe receiving a predefined condition comprising a telephone number of a calling telephone station and a telephone number of a called telephone station; receiving the telephone number of the calling telephone station and the telephone number of the called telephone station; and if the telephone number of the calling telephone station and the telephone number of the called telephone are those of the predefined condition, then debiting the calling card account. Instead, Walker describes comparing only the telephone number of the called telephone station with a list of authorized cardholder accounts, and if the telephone number of the called telephone station has an associated account, debiting the calling card account, without suggesting comparing both the telephone number of the calling telephone station and the telephone number of the called telephone station with the list of authorized cardholder accounts.

For at least the reasons given above, claims 1 and 15 are allowable over Walker. Since claims 2 and 10-11 depend from claim 1 and recite additional features, Applicant respectfully submits that Walker does not make obvious Applicant's claimed invention as

embodied in claims 2 and 10-11 for at least these reasons. Accordingly, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

B. Claim 18 is allowable.

As amended, claim 18 recites that a system for managing prepaid communications comprises an application module operative to receive a predefined condition, wherein the predefined condition comprises an origination number and a destination number; detect a communications connection from an origination number directed to a destination number; determine if the origination number of the received communications connection is the origination number of the predefined condition and if the destination number of the received communications connection is the destination number of the predefined condition; and if the origination number of the received communications connection is the origination number of the predefined condition and if the destination number of the received communications connection is the destination number of the predefined condition, then deduct the cost of the communications connection from the user account.

Walker does not teach, suggest, or describe a system for managing prepaid communications as recited by claim 18. In contrast, Walker describes a system for enabling prepayment of telephone call charges including a call processing computer operative to receive the telephone number of the called telephone station from the calling party; compare the telephone number of the called telephone station with a list of authorized cardholder accounts; and if the telephone number of the called telephone station has an associated cardholder account, then connect the call to the called telephone station and debiting the calling card account. This is not analogous to the system recited in claim 18 because Walker fails to teach, suggest, or describe that the call processing computer is operative to receive a predefined condition comprising a telephone number of a calling telephone station and a telephone number of a called telephone station; receive the telephone number of the calling telephone station and the telephone number of the called telephone station; and if the telephone number of the calling telephone station and the telephone number of the called telephone are those of the predefined condition, then debit the calling card account. Instead, Walker describes that the call processing computer is operative to compare only the telephone number of the called

telephone station with a list of authorized cardholder accounts, and if the telephone number of the called telephone station has an associated account, debit the calling card account, without suggesting that the call processing computer is operative to compare the telephone number of the calling telephone station and the telephone number of the called telephone station with the list of authorized cardholder accounts.

For at least the reasons given above, claim 18 is allowable over Walker. Accordingly, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) Over Lauzon

Claims 17 and 19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by United States Patent Application Publication No. 2003/0043984 to Lauzon (hereinafter "Lauzon"). As noted above, claims 17 and 19 are canceled without prejudice rendering the rejection to these claims moot.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) Over Walker in View of Lesley

Claims 3-4 and 7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Walker in view of United States Patent No. 6,188,752 to Lesley (hereinafter "Lesley"). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

For at least the reasons stated above, claim 1 is allowable over Walker. Since claims 3-4 and 7 depend from claim 1 and recite additional features, Applicant respectfully submits that the combined teaching of Walker and Lesley does not make obvious Applicant's claimed invention as embodied in claims 3-4 and 7 for at least these reasons. Accordingly, withdrawal of these rejections is respectfully requested.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) Over Walker in View of Lauzon

Claim 9 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Walker in view of Lauzon. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

For at least the reasons stated above, claim 1 is allowable over Walker. Since claim 9 depends from claim 1 and recites additional features, Applicant respectfully submits that the combined teaching of Walker and Lauzon does not make obvious

Applicant's claimed invention as embodied in claim 9 for at least these reasons. Accordingly, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) Over Lesley in View of Player

Claims 12, 14, 16, and 20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lesley in view of United States Patent No. 6,542,590 to Player et al. (hereinafter "Player"). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

A. Claims 12, 14, and 16 are allowable.

As amended, claim 12 recites that a method for prepaid wireline comprises creating a plurality of user accounts associated with the origination number, wherein each of the plurality of user accounts is associated with a different access code; crediting a first user account of the plurality of user accounts associated with the origination number with a first prepaid credit amount, wherein the first user account comprises a first access code; crediting a second user account of the plurality of user accounts associated with the origination number with a second prepaid credit amount, wherein the second user account comprises a second access code; receiving a proffered code; if the proffered code comprises the first access code, deducting the cost of the communications connection from the first prepaid credit amount; and if the proffered code comprises the second access code, deducting the cost of the communications connection from the second prepaid credit amount. Similarly, claim 16 recites that a computer readable medium for prepaid communications comprises a second set of instructions for creating a plurality of user accounts associated with the origination number, wherein each of the plurality of user accounts is associated with a different access code; a third set of instructions for crediting a first user account of the plurality of user accounts associated with the origination number with a first prepaid credit amount, wherein the first user account includes a first access code; a fourth set of instructions for crediting a second user account of the plurality of user accounts associated with the origination number with a second prepaid credit amount, wherein the second user account includes a second access code; a fifth set of instructions for detecting a code; a sixth set of instructions for deducting the cost of the communications connection from the first prepaid credit amount

if the code is the first access code; and a seventh set of instructions for deducting the cost of the communications connection from the second prepaid credit amount if the code is the second access code.

Lesley does not teach, suggest, or describe a method or computer readable medium for prepaid communications as recited by claims 12 and 16, respectively. In contrast, Lesley describes a method for facilitating prepayment for communication services including assigning a subscriber a database record that includes an account number corresponding to the number used to identify a subscriber's basic subscription to a prepayment service, an associated prepaid monetary value, and a personal identification number; detecting a request for prepay network service from a subscriber; requesting the subscriber to enter a security code or personal identification number in order to make sure the service request is authorized; if the request is authorized, then checking the subscriber's record to determine whether there is sufficient prepaid value in the subscriber's record to pay for the requested telecommunications service; and if so, authorizing the requested telecommunications service up to the prepaid amount stored in the subscriber's record. This is not analogous to the method or computer readable medium as recited by claims 12 and 16, respectively, because Lesley fails to teach, suggest, or describe that a subscriber's database record can be associated with a plurality of user accounts each of which are associated with a different access code such that when an access code is received, the cost of the requested telecommunications service is deducted from the user account associated with the received access code.

Lesley also describes receiving a request to add to the subscriber's existing prepayment amount; prompting the subscriber for the monetary amount to be added; receiving the desired amount from the subscriber; and updating the subscriber's database record by adding the input amount. This is not analogous to the method or computer readable medium as recited by claims 12 and 16, respectively, because Lesley fails to teach, suggest, or describe updating a first user account of a plurality of user accounts associated with the origination code with a first prepaid credit amount and updating a second user account of the plurality of user accounts associated with the origination code with a second prepaid credit amount. Instead, Lesley describes updating the subscriber's

database record which Lesley fails to describe can be associated with a plurality of user accounts..

The office action relies on the teaching of Player to allegedly cure the deficiencies of the teaching of Lesley. However, like Lesley, Player does not teach, suggest, or describe a method or computer readable medium for prepaid communications as recited by claims 12 and 16, respectively. On the contrary, Player describes a method of enabling telecommunications services provided over a line to be charged to a selected one of two or more accounts including storing information to indicate that the line is associated with two or more accounts; receiving an access code from a caller; establishing a call over the line; and charging the cost for the call to the account associated with the received access code. This is not analogous to the method or computer readable medium recited in claims 12 and 16, respectively, because Player fails to teach, suggest, or describe crediting a first account associated with the line with a first prepaid credit amount; crediting a second account associated with the line with a second prepaid credit amount; and deducting the cost of the call from the account associated with the received access code. Instead, Player describes charging the account associated with the received access code, without suggesting crediting a first account with a first prepaid credit amount and a second account with a second prepaid credit amount and deducting the cost of the call from the account associated with the received access code.

For at least the reasons given above, claims 12 and 16 are allowable over the combined teaching of Lesley and Player. Since claim 14 depends from claim 12 and recites additional features, Applicant respectfully submits that the combined teaching of Lesley and Player does not make obvious Applicant's claimed invention as embodied in claim 14 for at least these reasons. Accordingly, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

Claim 20 is allowable.

As amended, claim 20 recites that a system for managing prepaid communications comprises an application module operative to credit a first user account of the plurality of user accounts associated with the origination number with a first prepaid credit amount, wherein the first user account comprises a first access code; credit a second user account

of the plurality of user accounts associated with the origination number with a second prepaid credit amount, wherein the second user account comprises a second access code; if the proffered code comprises the first access code, deduct the cost of the communications connection from the first prepaid credit amount; and if the proffered code comprises the second access code, deduct the cost of the communications connection from the second prepaid credit amount.

Lesley does not teach, suggest, or describe a system for managing prepaid communications as recited by claim 20. On the contrary, Lesley describes a system for facilitating prepayment for communication services including a service control point operative to assign a subscriber a database record that includes an account number corresponding to the number used to identify a subscriber's basic subscription to a prepayment service, an associated prepaid monetary value, and a personal identification number; detect a request for prepay network service from a subscriber; request the subscriber to enter a security code or personal identification number in order to make sure the service request is authorized; if the request is authorized, then check the subscriber's record to determine whether there is sufficient prepaid value in the subscriber's record to pay for the requested telecommunications service; and if so, authorize the requested telecommunications service up to the prepaid amount stored in the subscriber's record. This is not analogous to the system recited by claim 20 because Lesley fails to teach, suggest, or describe that the subscriber's database record can be associated with a plurality of user accounts each of which are associated with a different access code such that when an access code is received, the cost of the requested telecommunications service is deducted from the user account associated with the received access code.

Lesley also describes that the service control point is operative to receive a request to add to the subscriber's existing prepayment amount; prompt the subscriber for the monetary amount to be added; receive the desired amount from the subscriber; and update the subscriber's database record by adding the input amount. This is not analogous to the system recited by claim 20 because Lesley fails to teach, suggest, or describe that the service control point is operative to update a first user account of a plurality of user accounts associated with the origination code with a first prepaid credit amount and update a second user account of the plurality of user accounts associated with

the origination code with a second prepaid credit amount. Instead, Lesley describes that the service control point is operative to update the subscriber's database record which Lesley fails to describe can be associated with a plurality of user accounts.

The office action relies on the teaching of Player to allegedly cure the deficiencies of the teaching of Lesley. However, like Lesley, Player does not teach, suggest, or describe a system for managing prepaid communications as recited by claim 20. In contrast, Player describes a system of enabling telecommunications services provided over a line to be charged to a selected one of two or more accounts operative to store information to indicate that the line is associated with two or more accounts; receive an access code from a caller; establish a call over the line; and charge the cost for the call to the account associated with the received access code. This is not analogous to the system recited by claim 20 because Player fails to teach, suggest, or describe that the system is operative to credit a first account associated with the line with a first prepaid credit amount; credit a second account associated with the line with a second prepaid credit amount; and deduct the cost of the call from the account associated with the received access code. Instead, Player describes that the system is operative to charge the account associated with the received access code, without suggesting that the system is operative to credit a first account with a first prepaid credit amount and a second account with a second prepaid credit amount and deduct the cost of the call from the account associated with the received access code.

For at least the reasons given above, claim 20 is allowable over the combined teaching of Lesley and Player. Accordingly, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) Over Lesley in View of Player and Further in View of Lauzon

Claim 13 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Lesley in view of Player and further in view of Lauzon. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

For at least the reasons stated above, claim 12 is allowable over the combined teaching of Lesley and Player. Since claim 13 depends from claim 12 and recites additional features, Applicant respectfully submits that the combined teaching of Lesley,

Player, and Lauzon does not make obvious Applicant's claimed invention as embodied in claim 13 for at least these reasons. Accordingly, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

For at least these reasons, Applicant asserts that the pending claims 1-4, 7, 9-16, 18, and 20 are in condition for allowance. Applicant further asserts that this response addresses each and every point of the Office Action, and respectfully requests that the Examiner pass this application with claims 1-4, 7, 9-16, 18, and 20 to allowance. Should the Examiner have any questions, please contact Applicant's undersigned attorney at 404.954.5042.

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Respectfully submitted,

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Alan G. Gorman". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Alan G. Gorman
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